

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow. This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

Claim 9 is requested to be cancelled. Claims 6 and 8 are currently being amended. Claims 11-13 are being added. After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 6-8 and 10-13 are now pending in this application. Support for the amendment to claim 6 may be found on pages 3 and 4 of the specification and in originally filed claim 1. Claim 8 was amended to correct a typo. Claims 11-13 recite limitations from claim 6 in the alternative. No new matter was added.

Claims 6-10 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as based on a disclosure which is not enabling. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 6-10 would be allowed if claim 6 was amended to recite that the titanium carbide, carbonitride or carbonitroxide layer in the hard coating film had a columnar crystal structure with a ratio of particle diameters recited in original claim 1. In response, applicants amended claim 6 according to the examiner's helpful suggestion to place claims 6-8 and 10-13 in condition for allowance. Applicants note that the amendment to claim 6 was made to overcome the rejection and to expedite the allowance of the application and should not be construed as an admission that claim 6, as originally filed, was not enabling.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

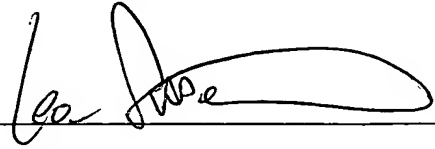
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

6/10/04

By



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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.